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ABSTRACT

This document traces the history of volunteerism in the literacy field, discusses the current role and use of volunteers, and assesses the potential and the limits of volunteerism as a current and future means for overcoming illiteracy in the United States. (The major conclusion is that the current delivery system of literacy activities can go no further without additional funding.) The introduction reviews the changing standards of literacy and volunteers and literacy. The second chapter describes the pioneering volunteer-managed agencies--Laubach Literacy Action and Literacy Volunteers of America--and mentions legislative action for literacy. The third chapter covers the adult basic education program, community-based organizations, libraries, correctional institutions, and churches. New frontiers envisioned in the fourth chapter include the growth of professionalism, changes in the role and use of volunteers, corporate volunteerism as a force, a trend toward cooperation among the providers, and funding. The fifth chapter, entitled "The Potential of Volunteers," discusses the myths, advantages, and limitations of volunteerism. The document ends with a list of 13 references. (CML)

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PIONEERS AND NEW FRONTIERS

The Role of Volunteers in Combating Adult Illiteracy

prepared for

The Business Council for Effective Literacy

by

Dianne Kangisser

May 1985

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BCEL Foreword

The Business Council for Effective Literacy is engaged in increasing the business community's involvement as an active partner in addressing the U.S. adult basic skills problem. To give solid guidance to the private sector, however, we have also had to concern ourselves with the public sector's role in the field, especially federal and state governments. And we have been striving to develop and provide information and analyses that will help both sectors better understand the scope and complexities of the illiteracy problem as well as the steps that each can best take in a combined effort to overcome it.

To help advance these goals, we maintain a varied publications program, including a quarterly newsletter for the business community. PIONEERS AND NEW FRONTIERS is our first monograph.

PIONEERS AND NEW FRONTIERS focuses on the place of volunteers in the field of adult basic skills. Written for BCEL by Dianne Kangisser, former Executive Director of Literacy Volunteers of New York City, the paper traces the history of volunteerism in the literacy field and discusses the current role and use of volunteers--by Literacy Volunteers of America, Laubach Literacy, ABE, and the array of other organizations and programs that make up the national system of provision. Most important, it also assesses the potential and the limits of volunteerism as a current and future means for overcoming illiteracy in this country.

Among other things, Ms. Kangisser calls for dispelling two myths that have persisted over the years and are gaining credence. One is that volunteerism is a panacea. In fact, the larger pool of volunteers which will be generated by the national Ad Council awareness campaign, though badly needed, will not by itself be adequate to reach the millions of adult illiterates in need of help. The other is that volunteer programs and the heavier use of volunteers in ABE and the other professionally-managed programs provide the best route to the future because this approach is free or will cost little. Actually, while the use of volunteers <u>is</u> cost-effective, it nevertheless costs the programs

substantially more than is recognized. And it will cost more in the coming years if programs are to be expanded and to give effective instruction.

Another section of PIONEERS AND NEW FRONTIERS discusses the many contributions that volunteers uniquely make in the field. For example, people volunteer in the first place because they "care" and are thus especially sensitive to the motivational problems of adult illiterates. And they can be flexible in meeting the special scheduling needs of adults, most of whom have family and/or job responsibilities.

Ms. Kangisser also addresses the need for the programs themselves to recognize and work on their weaknesses. She discusses such problem areas as planning and management, program evaluation, learning assessment, fund development, and intensiveness of instruction. But she points out that problems in these areas, more often than not, are the result of the programs having too few resources.

The paper's major conclusion is that the current delivery system can go no further without additional resources. Needed, from public and private sector alike, is major new funding: for program and materials development; staff and volunteer training; management, planning, and evaluation; and research and dissemination.

In presenting this paper, BCEL hopes to shed new light on volunteerism in literacy--and especially on the question of how far in this direction the nation realistically can expect to go. We hope both public and private-sector groups will find the paper useful.

Finally, given our basic organizational purpose, we would be remiss not to include some guide to action for those in the business community seeking to help combat adult illiteracy. Following are seven ways that companies large and small can make an important difference:

> Give grants and in-kind assistance to local adult literacy programs which operate in communities where there are company headquarters or branches. Most programs are run by volunteers or use them in other capacities.

- Make grants for the development of new literacy approaches and services--e.g. the use of computers and television for extending outreach.
- Give grants and in-kind assistance to the national offices of such groups as Laubach Literacy, Literacy Volunteers of America, the Association for Community-Based Education, the Coalition for Literacy, and BCEL itself.
- Join and/or provide financial or in-kind help to local and state literacy planning councils and agencies.
- Provide financial support for centers of adult literacy research, data gathering, and information dissemination.
- Set up employee basic skills programs, and encourage company executives, employees, and their families to serve as volunteers in community programs.
- Press for more public support for literacy programs and planning at the state and national levels.

BCEL officers and staff interact regularly with literacy groups and planners around the country. We do this to give encouragement to them, to keep informed on their activities and needs, and to strengthen our own judgments about needed forms of assistance and opportunities for funding and other help. But our primary goal is to aid business in responding to the needs identified. Many business leaders already are turning to us for guidance as they seek to be more involved, and we look forward to being of help to others in the future.

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Dianne Kangisser

A: INTRODUCTION

The Changing Standards of Literacy

Today it is assumed that universal literacy has been a basic tenet of our democratic society from its inception, carried out by our public education system. However, contrary to popular myth, not everyone could read in "the good old days," nor was everyone expected to.

Standards of literacy in the U.S. and the developed countries have changed substantially over the past few centuries. At one time, simply being able to write one's name made one literate. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, being able to read aloud fluently from a familiar religious text such as the Bible constituted literacy. Comprehension of the material was not a consideration.(1)

Then it was an accepted fact that only a small percentage of the population would become literate. Few completed high school; many did not even finish elementary school. Ayres reported in 1909 (2) that only 13 of a group of 100 children who had been in school at age 7 were still there at age 16. Furthermore, 20 percent of students at each grade level were not promoted. Referring to this time period, Ayres stated that "the general tendency of American cities is to carry all of their children through fifth grade, to take one-half of them to eighth grade and one in ten through high school." Not until early in this century, as an increasing number of students participated in the public education system, did universal literacy become a major concern of the educational establishment.

Today, people are expected to attain a higher level of literacy than ever before. In describing this phenomenon, Resnick and Resnick state that "the ability to understand an unfamiliar text, rather than simply recite a familiar one, became an accepted goal of reading instruction and the new standard for literacy. ... The 1920s marked the first time in history that such a rigorous standard had been applied in the U.S."(3)

The assumption now is that all citizens should become literate, yet according to the U.S. Department of Education, 27 million adult Americans are functionally illiterate. They lack the reading, writing, mathematical, and oral communication skills needed to cope with the tasks of everyday living, such as filling out an insurance form or a job application, shopping, banking, and reading the instructions on a medicine bottle or in a simple manual. Another 45 million adults are only marginally competent in these areas.

In 1909, a school dropout with minimal skills could usually find decent unskilled work and function adequately in the community despite a lack of basic skills. Dropouts today are not so fortunate. Like their 1909 counterparts, they are often victims of class, race, and sex discrimination, poor schooling, and poverty. According to Hunter, persons who are functionally illiterate in this country are primarily the poor, including poor whites chiefly in the south, the unemployed, the racial and ethnic minorities, and immigrants.(4) Unlike their 1909 counterparts, however, dropouts today must also confront the demands of an increasingly complex society.

As technological advances have brought about changes in the social requirements for literacy, the need for unskilled and semiskilled labor has been reduced. The result has been a burgeoning population of adults with multiple disadvantages who cannot compete in the marketplace and who have difficulty meeting personal and work-related goals. And 2 1/4 million more adults are added to this pool every year.

In addition to the personal tragedy of individuals whose lives are limited by an inability to read and write, profound societal costs are incurred as a result of this situation. For example, in the business community, there is a growing sense that illiteracy among members of the workforce affects productivity and leads to poor product quality, lost management and supervisory time, and restricted mobility and promotability of employees.

Despite the extent of the problem and the attention that has been given to illiteracy in recent years, however, we are reaching at most 5 percent of those who are in need of literacy services. Thus, finding ways to meet the educa-

tional needs of these functional illiterates constitutes a crucial issue for the nation.

Volunteers and Literacy

There are many providers of literacy services. The public system includes the federal Adult Basic Education program (ABE), libraries, and correctional institutions. Private providers range from national voluntary groups to community-based organizations (CBOs) and churches. Sometimes the providers form partnerships and linkages to strengthen and extend their individual service capacities, although each has a distinct organizational pattern, philosophy, and set of goals.

A common thread among many of these providers is the use of volunteers. Just as each has evolved a different response to serving adult illiterates, each has developed its own approach to the use of volunteers. This paper looks at the role volunteers are playing in the provider system and assesses both the potential and the limits of the volunteer movement in literacy.

Volunteers have contributed their energy and creativity to the work of building America since its inception. Unique to this country is the extent to which they participate in a broad range of areas, from civic affairs to social welfare, from the cultural and spiritual to the educational. Within these spheres they perform a variety of activities, including direct service, social action, public relations, and fund-raising.

In By the People, Ellis and Noyes note that in many cases institutions such as the YMCA, movements such as civil rights, and professions such as public-interest law owe their early development to the dedicated work of self-trained citizens. And they remind us that "volunteers are still on the front line of social progress, working on concerns not yet handled by institutions. Today's volunteering will shape tomorrow."(5)

Volunteers have implemented social change in hundreds of areas, yet volunteerism to advance literacy is a fairly recent phenomenon. Only in the last 25

years or so has it become a significant force in literacy, though there were some fascinating undertakings in different pockets of the country dating back to the last century. For example, a literacy campaign to educate blacks in the South after the Civil War took hold in 1866, and by 1869 there were reportedly nearly 10,000 literacy volunteers, half of them black, involved in this movement.(6) In 1911, the "Moonlight School" phenomenon began in North Carolina. Teachers who were volunteers tutored adult mill workers until these Moonlight Schools were eventually incorporated into the regular school system.(7)

The volunteer response to the problem of illiteracy has passed through several overlapping phases and is still in the process of change. The first phase--roughly the late 1950s through the 1960s--saw the creation of the two national voluntary literacy organizations, both located in Syracuse, New York, and both rooted in the quest of a self-trained individual who recognized a need and rallied others to the cause. The second phase, the 1970s to the early 1980s, brought a variety of other organizational providers into the picture. Phase three, beginning in the early 1980s and still evolving, can be characterized as a period of growing professionalism and greater cooperation among the providers.

B: FIRST PHASE: VOLUNTEER-MANAGED AGENCIES PIONEER

Laubach Literacy Action

Frank Laubach, social worker, sociologist, and minister, spent his professional life as a Christian missionary; his passion was literacy. He pursued his goal of universal literacy in hundreds of countries, starting with the Philippines in 1929. While the literacy skills he taught were basic and would not suffice for citizens of an industrial country today, he demonstrated that even the most uneducated peasants in underdeveloped countries could be taught the rudiments of reading and writing.

Laubach is said to have worked 300 languages (some having no written form) into a formula for instruction based on letter-sound relationships, using key words and pictures for recognition. He trained newly-literate volunteers to teach others, hence the phrase by which his method became known: "each one, teach one."

Although based in Syracuse, the Laubach focus remained primarily international over the years and an organization grew up around Frank Laubach's work called Laubach Literacy International. Laubach's overseas efforts were sustained by church groups in the U.S., and in 1968 his supporters initiated the National Affiliate for Literacy Advance (NALA) as an American membership organization with a domestic focus. More than a decade later, in 1979-80, under new leadership, NALA adopted a new name--Laubach Literacy Action--and broader goals.

Since its beginnings Laubach Literacy Action has evolved into a major national organization which, today, operates through some 500 affiliate programs in 40 states, serving 60,000 students with 50,000 tutors. These affiliates are autonomous groups that recruit, train, and support their own volunteer literacy tutors with technical assistance help from the national office of Laubach.

Laubach programs range from the very sophisticated with full-time staff members and hundreds of volunteers to small groups run by a few volunteers, often out of a home. The average program has about 30 volunteer tutors and no paid

staff. A local library, civic organization, church group, or business is often the sponsor of the program.

Using a system of instruction for English similar to that used by Frank Laubach for other languages, these tutors use a graduated series of highly structured skill books. The curriculum, which is phonic in approach, is published by New Readers Press, the publishing arm of Laubach. New Readers offers a wide range of fiction and nonfiction material for beginning adult readers.

Laubach volunteers have a choice of instructional roles. They can be trained to tutor native and non-native adults in basic reading and English, write simplified reading materials for adults and teens, and/or train other tutors. To qualify as a tutor trainer, they must first be experienced in tutoring students and then undergo Laubach certification.

The Laubach national office sets the direction and tone for the organization as a whole. The 25 staff members develop new programs and support on-going ones, disseminate information on literacy, and establish criteria for the use and training of volunteers. The current annual budget is $1 million, 60 percent of which comes from New Readers Press sales. The balance of funding comes largely from foundations, direct mail solicitation, bequests, donations, and small amounts of public funding.

Laubach Literacy Action adopted an ambitious five-year plan in 1983 to double the number of volunteers and students by 1988. It is acknowledged that this goal can be accomplished only if the delivery system is expanded and improved and the local programs receive a greater degree of assistance. If Laubach fulfills its mission, however, it will also move beyond its traditional training methods and services to offer assistance as a broker to any group involved in literacy, member or non-member. Its purpose will be to help programs identify their needs and then link them through information and referral to existing resources in the community.

Literacy Volunteers of America

Because of Frank Laubach's work in literacy, Ruth Colvin, among many other individuals, became aware of the issue of adult illiteracy. A homemaker from Syracuse, New York, she discovered that a shocking number of adults in her community could not read. As a result, she began speaking before hundreds of civic and religious groups in New York State, involving friends and sympathizers, exhorting community leaders, and mobilizing community resources. Armed initially with financial support from Church Women United and with Laubach training methods and materials (not yet used extensively in the U.S.), she set out to equip other volunteers in Syracuse to tutor and manage a local literacy program. Thus Literacy Volunteers (LV) was born. Word spread quickly, and requests came from tutors and students in other areas of the state. To assist them, Colvin and her volunteers developed and distributed a handbook for establishing and maintaining a literacy program. LV affiliate groups began to proliferate and, as in the Laubach program, worked to channel the volunteers' interest constructively.

As the organization grew it took a different approach from that of Laubach, both organizationally and instructionally. After consulting with reading specialists, Colvin decided to produce her own tutor-training materials. Eventually she teamed up with Dr. Jane Root, a distinguished reading professional. Together they advocated several teaching techniques in reading, arriving at a more eclectic approach that was less phonic in nature. The Tutor Training Workshop which resulted was put on slides and tapes for ease of training. An English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) component was added a few years later.

In 1967, LV was incorporated as Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc. (LVA), a national nonprofit organization with a volunteer board of directors and a paid professional staff. A grant from the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in 1971 enabled the New York State model to be replicated in surrounding states and led to a distinct organizational structure for LVA. This structure includes a national office which develops model programs, establishes new affiliates in areas not served by a state organization, and provides technical

assistance to its members and outside groups; state organizations which establish and support the local affiliates according to LVA policies and procedures; and the local affiliates within which volunteers perform a variety of tasks in order to deliver the services--program management, recruiting and training volunteers, recruiting and matching students, publicity, fund-raising, supervision of tutors, and record-keeping.

LVA's plan for the future includes extending its support structure to affiliates located in states now lacking an LVA state office. The national office wants to establish regional branches with field staff providing technical assistance to these local programs.

An important characteristic of LVA is the degree to which it cooperates with other groups. Joint programs with correctional facilities, libraries, schools, and business and industry abound. Furthermore, LVA staff members provide assistance to agencies that want to start tutorial programs in basic reading or ESL. Several workshops are available to them, including tutor training, and training in program management.

There are currently 200 LVA affiliates which collectively have 15,000 tutors serving 21,000 students. LVA-national has a staff of 11 and an annual budget of about $500,000. Funding support comes from the sale of training materials, fees charged for technical assistance, membership dues, contracts for special projects, and contributions from foundations, corporations, and individuals.

Legislative Action for Literacy

A major federal initiative occurred in the literacy field during this first phase which revolutionized adult education in the U.S. and ultimately led to a widening of roles for volunteers.

In 1964-65, the Office of Economic Opportunity created the Adult Basic Education Program. Its purpose was to provide individuals 18 years old and over with an opportunity to develop or improve reading, language, mathematical, and writing

skills. The premise of the legislation was that if the educationally disadvantaged could acquire basic skills, they would become more employable and be able to participate more fully in society. (Some 80 percent of federal ABE funds are now allocated for people with skills below the eighth grade level. Currently, federal funding for ABE is $100 million annually.)

Under the Adult Education Act (which has been rewritten four times), federal funds are administered through state education departments and channeled to local school districts and community agencies which operate adult basic and secondary education programs as well as English-as-a-Second Language. National enrollment in ABE programs has grown from nearly 38,000 in 1965 to 2.6 million at the present time.

C: SECOND PHASE: OTHER PROVIDERS ENTER THE PICTURE

In the second phase of the voluntary response to illiteracy, roughly the 1970s to the early 1980s, a variety of different groups began to participate in the delivery of literacy services. Libraries, correctional institutions, and community-based organizations* (CBOs) established literacy components for their programs and often recruited volunteers as instructors. LVA and Laubach expanded their roles in the volunteer literacy movement by providing expertise and materials to some of these groups and by initiating programs in still-unserved areas.

For many of these literacy providers, today as well as earlier, the issue is not whether to use volunteers but how best to use them. Not surprisingly, providers' philosophies toward volunteers differ, as do their approaches to teaching adult illiterates. ABE personnel believe that constructive learning can take place in the classroom, and they frequently use volunteers as aides to teachers. Community-based groups often reject one-to-one tutoring, which they think isolates students, in favor of small-group instruction. Here volunteers assist professional teachers or in some cases lead groups themselves.

In short, the growth and greater diversification of the system of provision has been accompanied by an expanded and more varied use of volunteers, as discussed in more detail below.

Adult Basic Education Program

Over the past twenty years, the federal ABE program has become the largest single provider of adult basic skills in the nation. As noted earlier, enrollment has grown to the present 2.6 million from only 38,000 in 1965. Today an individual 16 years old or beyond the age of compulsory school attendance can enter any of the 14,000 local ABE programs currently operating

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* Generally multi-purpose service and development organizations.

in 50 states. Approximately 50 percent of those served are enrolled in adult basic education classes (the other half are in adult secondary and ESL classes).

There was a relationship between volunteerism and the ABE program from the outset, but it was only during the 1970s that volunteers in ABE really took hold.

Although the U.S. Department of Education does not have precise data, in the judgment of Paul Delker, Director of the Division of Adult Education, volunteers are now being used in ABE programs to a significant degree. Delker attributes this phenomenon, at least in part, to the 1978 Amendments to the Adult Education Act, which required that a broad range of community organizations, in addition to the public school system, be funded to deliver ABE services. As a result of the Amendments, more community colleges, businesses, unions, churches, and community-based organizations are sponsoring programs, many in cooperation with local school districts and sometimes with support from public adult education funds. This widening of ABE probably led to greater volunteer participation as it provided an underserved population of students with more opportunities for education in more appropriate settings.

However, not all teachers and administrators in ABE have always trusted or welcomed volunteers wholeheartedly. Some still do not, although changes in this attitude are evident. This negative attitude is sometimes attributed to a long-standing conflict between the professional and the volunteer, who is perceived as an encroacher. However, at least one state education department director, Judith Koloski of Maryland, does not believe that this is primarily a turf issue. In Koloski's view, teachers who are underpaid and overworked, as ABE instructors often are, will not be receptive to the added responsibility of managing volunteers and will tend to resent the volunteer. In response to this problem, Koloski has developed a special training program to help ABE teachers use volunteers more effectively, aiming in the process to relieve some of their own pressures. The program appears to be producing results. Currently, 17 of 27 ABE projects in Maryland use volunteers (731 volunteers contributed 29,000 hours in 1984). More important, 13 of these 17 projects provide formal training for the volunteers, and 14 train teachers to work with volunteers.

Traditionally, the ABE volunteer has worked as a one-to-one tutor with the beginning student, either in the classroom or outside, or as an aide to the classroom teacher. However, volunteers now are encouraged to assume a greater variety of tasks. In Arizona, where 736 volunteers contributed 30,000 hours in 1983, volunteers provide transportation for students; call, write, or visit students who have dropped out; and tutor homebound students, in addition to assisting teachers in the classroom. Since many of the volunteers are retired teachers themselves, they may serve as classroom teachers on a volunteer basis. In Nebraska, volunteers are used by local ABE programs for public relations and record-keeping. They also help with fund-raising.

ABE has close ties to Laubach and LVA, both of which provide tutors for local ABE sites. Moreover, cross-referral of students is a form of regular cooperation. Students who are ready to enter a more formal classroom setting or are too advanced for LVA and Laubach programs are referred to ABE, and ABE often refers students who need the one-to-one relationships to LVA and Laubach.

Nine of 10 LVA state coordinators are funded by ABE, and numerous local LVA and Laubach groups receive some financial support from ABE. In Minnesota, the state education system relies on the Minnesota Literacy Council (MLC), a Laubach program, to provide educational services in remote rural areas. The state makes funds available through school districts to MLC to hire part-time staff, often ABE teachers, to administer 61 local projects. MLC staff members work with volunteers to recruit and train tutors, recruit students, raise funds, and coordinate the day-to-day functions of the operation.

The Division of Adult Education Services of the U.S. Department of Education has recently developed a National Adult Education Volunteer Network. At present, 450 state and local practitioners use the Network to share information and materials on the subject of volunteerism. In 1982-83, 29 projects relating to the support of ABE through volunteer efforts received $600,000 in state discretionary funds for activities such as the development of volunteer tutorial programs. Many of these programs are using their professional expertise and experience to develop volunteer training to meet their individual needs.

Community-Based Organizations[8]

Community-based organizations have the best track record for reaching adults with the lowest educational achievement, although these agencies were not specifically established to teach literacy. They came into being as local responses to larger social and economic problems, but because they serve poor communities--where illiteracy is most prevalent--their programs generally include a literacy component.

CBOs vary in size, outreach, and level of sophistication. However, they all operate on the premise that the problem of adult illiteracy is not solely educational and that those who lack conventional basic skills often suffer other forms of deprivation: poverty, unemployment, lack of schooling, racial or ethnic discrimination, and social isolation. Many of these people do not see how literacy can make a difference in their lives.

These severely disadvantaged persons are the most difficult to reach and thus are served the least by traditional groups which focus specifically on the acquisition of reading, writing, and mathematical skills. The primary goal of the CBOs is not to improve the ability to read and write per se but to bring about a larger change within individuals and the community--through such activities as programs for battered women, health workshops, parenting classes, summer camps for disabled children, and home-construction training. Typically, basic skills instruction is given in these larger contexts. Notably, in their literacy work the average rate of study completion is estimated to be 65-70 percent compared with 25-50 percent in the more traditional programs.

The number of these highly localized entities is hard to estimate because they are usually free-standing and independent, rarely having links to national associations or other programs. One major exception is the Association for Community Based Education in Washington, D.C. ACBE, founded in 1976, has 59 institutional members serving 105,000 adults in 31 states. ACBE member organizations are linked primarily to community development, but they have education programs ranging from job counseling and career preparation to accredited community college-based programs to adult literacy. In a recent

survey, ACBE identified 3,500 non-member community-based programs around the country that also offer literacy services. These programs individually reach only small numbers of adult illiterates, but collectively they provide basic skills to an estimated 600-700,000 people, and they are at the cutting edge in providing literacy services to adults at the local level.

They are also at the cutting edge of volunteerism. Many CBOs use volunteers as an integral part of their programs. A few are staffed exclusively by volunteers, but most use volunteers to augment the core service. The volunteers work as part of a team with paid staff who supervise them. Volunteers may be trained either on a one-to-one or group basis.

More importantly, CBOs have sometimes been able to move beyond the pool of volunteers who traditionally are recruited from the white middle classes, to include members of the same socioeconomic class and/or racial or ethnic group as the students. For example, at the Mountain Women's Exchange, the tutors are from the same rural Appalachian community as the students and are usually their neighbors. These community volunteers are thought to be more sensitive to and respectful of the students than volunteers from outside the community.

CBOs also tend to place more value on sensitivity to learners than on academic credentials. Thus, many prefer to train their own teachers to work in a learner-centered style. Literacy Action in Atlanta seeks instructors who are experienced in managing group activity rather than those who are only expert in reading. It then provides these managers with 40 hours of preservice training to prepare them to teach reading. At Literacy Action, 50 percent of the volunteers are members of minority groups, although in this instance they are not usually from the same community as the students, who are mostly poor.

Although some CBOs operate one-to-one tutoring programs (particularly in rural areas), many promote group instruction because they see it as less isolating to the students. Most CBOs see learning as involving a group peer process in which the critical element is the students' sharing of their learning and life experiences.

Perhaps the most creative aspect of programs initiated by CBOs is the use of students themselves as volunteers. In Philadelphia at the Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program, students perform a myriad of noninstructional tasks. They serve on the planning committee, work on the newsletter, conduct small fund-raising events, and run an in-house snack bar. According to the staff, the students learn valuable skills in the process of volunteering and have a greater investment in the learning process. At the same time, they contribute immeasurably to the vitality and resources of the program.

Libraries[9]

Because they are present in nearly every community, the 15,000 public libraries in the U.S. have the potential to play a significant role in the literacy effort. The American Library Association (ALA), with an institutional and individual membership of 40,000, provides leadership to help realize that potential.

Early in this century, a small number of individual libraries offered limited literacy services. Some cooperated with existing basic skills providers, particularly local boards of education. A few attempted to meet the needs of immigrants in large urban areas by hosting ABE classes and providing reading material.

When funds became available through the Library Services and Construction Act of 1964, libraries began to make literacy programming for native-born illiterates a priority. Thus, since 1973 ALA has maintained an Office of Library Outreach Services whose major purpose is to reach potential clients who ordinarily are not library users--school dropouts, the poor, the underemployed, and disadvantaged racial and ethnic minorities. Between 1979 and 1981, with a grant from Eli Lilly Endowment, Outreach instructed 1,000 state librarians specifically on issues of adult illiteracy and trained them to design library literacy programs.

Depending on their size and resources, the needs of the community, and the partnerships they form, different library systems serve the cause of literacy in different ways. Some conduct on-premise literacy programs using their own staff to recruit, train, and support volunteers. Others act as literacy catalysts in the community. Some conduct information and referral services or simply provide comfortable nonschool settings for tutoring. Many house collections of material suited to the needs of new adult readers.

In Literacy and the Nation's Libraries, Helen Huguenor Lyman writes that a library has three principal roles in the literacy effort: education, community awareness, and collaboration.(10) It is in the collaboration role that libraries have had their greatest impact. Beginning in the late 1960s, libraries became a vital link in the literacy network, working with the gamut of literacy providers, particularly volunteer groups.

A natural alliance developed between LVA and Laubach and the libraries and they pooled their resources and expertise, thereby expanding literacy services to the community. There are no reliable statistics on the number of libraries that operate literacy programs today, but it is known that the majority involve LVA or Laubach. LVA staff members estimate that 95 percent of their affiliates have a cooperative relationship with a public library. And Laubach staff also report many library partnerships among their affiliate programs.

The Coventry Library in Rhode Island, an LVA affiliate, initiated a community-based volunteer literacy program with its own funds, though the project is run by an independent board of directors and the library functions as a silent partner. In Beaver County, Pennsylvania, the library system and Lutheran Church Women worked together to establish an adult literacy tutorial project at each of the 10 libraries in the system. The library hired staff members affiliated with Laubach and over the next five years developed a program with close ties to other community organizations. Last October, Pennsylvania State University took over direct operation of the program, with the libraries continuing to provide space for tutoring and their book collections for beginning readers.

Correctional Institutions[11]

There are 600,000 inmates in the U.S. In relation to the general population, they are disproportionately young, male, minority, poor, unemployed, and educationally deficient. A disproportionate number also are functionally illiterate, with estimates ranging up to 50 percent or more. Despite these numbers, and the link between illiteracy and crime, opportunities for basic skills instruction are extremely limited.

With the exception of a few states that have exemplary programs, according to an official of the Correctional Education Association most prisoners have little or no access to literacy services. On the average, a state spends only 5 percent of its total correctional budget on all inmate education and training, including literacy instruction. Apart from underfunding, state education programs also lack adequate space, equipment, and trained staff, and they are faced with the problems of inmate turnover and low motivation. In his study on Florida tutorial programs, Keon Chi found it ironic that inmates can earn rewards for nonacademic activities such as housekeeping and janitorial jobs but not for participating in educational programs.[12]

To the extent that there are prison basic skills programs, however, voluntary organizations have been a presence in the corrections field for some time, and their role is increasing. Volunteers in prison programs often serve the same functions as those in other less difficult settings. They encourage those not enrolled in a more advanced educational program to participate, and they supplement the institution's school system by providing special assistance to beginning readers who otherwise might lose interest.

Accurate statistics on the number of volunteer literacy programs in correctional institutions are not available. However, according to a 1981 survey by Chi, 27 states reported having volunteer tutorial programs.[13] Apparently, many if not most institutional volunteer literacy projects are affiliated with either Laubach or LVA and often have been initiated by one of these groups. Several years ago, a Laubach national office survey showed that 50 affiliate programs provided volunteers to tutor in correctional institutions. LVA

estimates that one-third to one-half of its affiliates are involved with prisons.

Many of the volunteer tutors are themselves inmates. At the Camp Hill facility in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, some 40 inmates run their own tutorial program. They were helped initially by the local Laubach program and subsequently ran a session showing inmates from other facilities in the state how to start a volunteer program.

LVA has pioneered in this area. With funding from the New York State Department of Correctional Services, LVA created a model program using VISTA volunteers to train and manage inmate and community volunteers. By 1978, 26 facilities in New York State were operating such programs, and the project was later replicated in Connecticut and Maine. According to the LVA field service staff, most LVA programs in statewide correctional systems are managed by correctional staff who have received LVA training.

In a new Louis Sherry-funded program in New Mexico, LVA staff have trained seven inmates to train other inmate tutors and to manage the program. The director of remedial reading will supervise the inmate volunteers.

Whether volunteers are inmates or residents of the community, evaluations and anecdotal evidence from these projects indicate that they are beneficial. Outside tutors represent a constructive form of community involvement and improve communication between the isolated inmates and the community. Among inmate volunteers, an increase in self-esteem has been reported and as a result of these volunteer programs, some inmates who entered prison as nonreaders have left prison able to read.

Churches[14]

Throughout Western history, there has been a traditional alliance between religion and literacy. In the U.S. today, most major denominations are involved in some way in literacy, usually at the local level. Many churches

operate jointly with Laubach and LVA member groups; others provide sites for ABE classes. It is difficult to obtain detailed information about their work, and so only the two largest and best known are mentioned here. One is run by the Lutheran Church Women (LCW), an official auxiliary of the Lutheran Church of America, and the other by the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

LCW is headquartered in Philadelphia and for years has promoted literacy services in the U.S., Canada, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. In its 15-year-old Volunteer Reading Aides Program, LCW performs three functions. First, it establishes literacy programs (basic reading and ESL) in unserved communities and makes referrals in areas where programs exist. Second, it offers technical assistance to many different organizations for literacy-related activities. For example, LCW staff members provided in-service training on a variety of topics to volunteer tutors and managers of the Laubach Literacy Council in Petersburg, Virginia. LCW also has carried out an evaluation of the California State Library Literacy Campaign.

Third, LCW seeks to raise members' consciousness about illiteracy. Trained volunteer literacy coordinators work to encourage other LCW members to become involved in existing programs or to start new programs. The nature of the training depends on the needs and characteristics of the adults to be served. Tutors are exposed to a variety of methods and instructional materials. LCW uses materials published by Laubach and LVA but produces its own volunteer training and student materials as well.

LCW encourages the training of volunteers for such non-tutoring tasks as community resource work, counseling, and program management. It also recommends the use of paid professional staff whenever possible. The program is universal and nonsectarian in its approach and serves about 1,000 people annually. Eighty-five percent of its budget comes from church member donations and the balance from fees charged for consulting services.

Like LCW, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) has a long history of literacy outreach, particularly to immigrants and refugees. It has been supported by the Home Mission Board in Atlanta for 25 years. Its basic skills programs for

both native nonreaders and speakers of a second language are closely tied to Christian ministry and evangelism, although most of the students are not church-affiliated.

SBC-sponsored programs are generally volunteer-managed and they reach an estimated few thousand adults annually. Often the women's organizations of a local church or group of churches will initiate a project. Although SBC is active in 50 states and Puerto Rico, it is largest and best-supported in Florida, Texas, and North Carolina.

SBC's three full-time literacy specialists provide training and assistance to local volunteer coordinators (some with as much as 20 years of service) who organize and train the volunteer tutors. SBC uses Laubach training materials supplemented by materials they have produced themselves. According to the central staff, there is a very strong commitment on the part of local volunteers, many of whom have given up other civic or church involvements to tutor.

D: THE THIRD PHASE: NEW FRONTIERS

As we have seen, the period of the 1970s and early 1980s was marked by a vast increase in the type and number of public and private literacy providers. This expansion brought with it a greater use of volunteers in literacy and paved the way for the third phase of volunteerism which is evolving now.

Four interrelated trends are currently taking place in our society: the professionalization of volunteerism, changes in the make-up of the volunteer pool and a more varied use of volunteers, the emergence of corporate-sponsored volunteerism, and greater cooperation in the field. These trends will be discussed in turn below.

Growth of Professionalism

One of the most important recent developments in volunteerism has been the increased professionalism of the field as a whole. In a recent article,(15) Kenn Allen, President of VOLUNTEER, noted the emphasis on promoting effective volunteering regardless of differences in program goals and approaches. Allen also observed that the structures for channeling people into volunteer work and for helping organizations use volunteers well--such as the Voluntary Action Centers--have become more viable. Furthermore, according to Ellis and Noyes, the volunteer coordinator is now an acknowledged professional supported by a body of theoretical and practical knowledge on how to manage volunteers.(16)

This trend has allowed literacy groups at all levels to gain access to community resources--institutions, professionals, and a body of written knowledge--that enable them to recruit and train volunteers more effectively. For example, in 1984, LVA revised and improved its **Management Handbook for Volunteer Programs** by drawing on new information and resources in the field. The handbook was then made available as a guide to creating and administering a well-organized program within which the tutorial relationship can thrive.

As the voluntary sector has become more professional, so has the entire literacy field. There is a new emphasis on standards and accountability among providers. Staff development training for both paid and volunteer teachers has been a major focus of these groups, and program and management-training materials are being produced and refined at a rapid pace. Increasingly large numbers of volunteers are attending conferences to gather new information and share experiences with colleagues.

In response to these developments, B. Dalton Bookseller recently convened a task force of adult literacy specialists to assist in developing a handbook called Guidelines for Effective Literacy Programs. The objective was two-fold: to develop a consensus on what the essential ingredients of an effective literacy program are and to present the results in such a way that literacy providers can measure themselves against clearly defined criteria. The handbook deals with everything from record-keeping to recruiting students and teachers. After assessing their programs, it is hoped that provider groups will use the handbook to help strengthen key program areas that may now be underdeveloped. With the same purpose in mind, the ACBE has developed a self-assessment manual for use by its members.

Changes in the Role and Use of Volunteers

Americans continue to volunteer for all kinds of public service despite changes in family and employment patterns, but they are giving fewer hours. A 1983 Gallup Poll showed that women are volunteering at a rate of 56 percent, the same rate as in 1981; men showed a slight increase in participation, from 47 percent in 1981 to 53 percent in 1983. However, 76 percent of the female volunteers polled are spending only five hours or less as a volunteer in an average week. This is not surprising, for the greatest number of female volunteers are between the ages of 25 and 39, 70 percent of whom work. Thus, the traditional female volunteer, who often gave as much as 20 hours or more a week to her chosen voluntary work, no longer has as much time to give. Even when she does, she tends to expect the work to be substantive and challenging.

Two points should be underscored here. One is that while the rate of female volunteerism has not declined the extent of service given has. Another is that while the rate of male volunteerism has grown nearly to that of women, women still make up the majority of literacy volunteers because men tend not to be as heavily involved in direct social service activities. The net result is that volunteer-managed programs must increasingly hire part-time and, where financially feasible, full-time paid personnel to coordinate programs that used to be run by volunteers. Many in the field consider this a beneficial development that has led to better use of volunteer skills and better-managed programs, but the economic implications of the development are obvious.

A new corollary trend observed by Allen is the expansion of the definition of volunteerism to include advocacy and administration as well as service delivery. The volunteer-managed literacy programs have always used volunteers in these capacities as well as for tutoring, and now other literacy providers are starting to do so. ABE has begun to use volunteers outside the classroom. CBOs are not only expanding volunteer roles but also continually broadening the pool of volunteers. They make special efforts to recruit ethnic and racial minority volunteers and those from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Some successfully recruit among the adult student population and invite them to get involved in all levels of the program, including administration.

Corporate Volunteerism As A Force

According to Allen, "the emergence of corporate-sponsored volunteer programs for employees is perhaps the most significant development in the volunteer community in recent years."(17) Corporate volunteerism came into its own in the 1970s by formalizing a trend that gradually had been taking place for over 50 years.(18)

The 1960s saw the initiation of corporate social action programs and a dramatic increase in employee volunteerism, most of it civic and charitable in nature. Company employees served on boards or were lent to nonprofit organizations; many participated in blood drives and special events for orphans.(19)

With the 1970s, however, came "the growing institutionalization of social responsibility--less and less a spur-of-the-moment altruistic binge, more and more a continuing function of management, a part of doing business."(20) Companies began to perceive volunteer participation as a legitimate expression of social responsibility. At the same time, nonprofit organizations (literacy groups among them) were beginning to look to companies as a good source of potential volunteers.

This new relationship between literacy projects and corporate-sponsored volunteer programs has enhanced adult basic education. It has expanded the outreach of volunteer literacy programs and their public relations capacity. A company desiring to get involved in literacy will often seek out a voluntary group to serve as a partner. Northwestern National Life Insurance Company and the Minnesota Literacy Council work together in this way. A volunteer coordinator from Northwestern recruits employees who are trained by the MLC to tutor under MLC supervision either in the company facility or the local community. The Grumman Corporation on Long Island began a similar arrangement with LVA in Nassau County last year.

B. Dalton Bookseller in Minneapolis has planned its national literacy initiative through 1986. Volunteers are central to its strategy, as is the continued allocation of company resources. One goal in the four-year plan is to increase the number of community-based volunteer programs supported in B. Dalton markets from 150 to 300. Another goal is to increase the number of literacy volunteers in those programs from 16,000 to 50,000. To that end, the company is preparing posters and bookmarks to attract potential volunteer tutors from the ranks of book purchasers in local markets.

In addition, literacy programs benefit increasingly from the participation of corporate employees who bring a range of experience to their work as tutors or in other roles. These volunteers can often put other company resources at the disposal of the literacy agency, such as printing and photocopying services, used furniture and equipment, and small cash contributions.

A Trend Toward Cooperation Among the Providers

In the past few years, turf problems, insularity, and rivalries among literacy groups have begun to yield to a greater tolerance for differences in philosophies and approaches. Cooperation among individual providers and the providers and other organizations is taking place to a greater extent, producing a more efficient use of available resources, increased program effectiveness, and more purposeful planning at all levels.

Both Laubach and LVA have been influential in increasing the national awareness of the scope of the literacy problem. Especially noteworthy is their role as contributors to the two new national efforts launched in 1983-84: the Secretary's Adult Literacy Initiative of the U.S. Department of Education and the Coalition for Literacy's national multi-media Ad Council awareness campaign. Both of these historic initiatives are dedicated to increasing the national cadre of volunteers available to help with adult basic skills instruction, and both draw heavily on LVA and Laubach experience.

The organizational focus of LVA and Laubach remains essentially the same: to provide materials and services to assist in the development of volunteer tutorial programs. But recently the two groups have begun to stress their similarities rather than their differences in order to respond better to a greater demand for their services.

Laubach is beginning to formalize a state organization system and a volunteer management training program similar to those of LVA. LVA, like Laubach, recently began to publish its own materials as a source of income and as a way to help enrich the literacy field. Laubach and LVA member groups are also starting to use each other's training and materials to supplement their own.

The leaderships of both organizations seem eager to work together in order to prevent duplication and to pool scant resources. Last year, for example, they applied jointly and obtained grants from the Federal Action Agency and B. Dalton Bookseller to develop guidelines for the literacy field on how to initiate a volunteer tutorial project. Jointly, they are field-testing demonstration

projects in an urban California setting and a rural area in Michigan. Moreover, the boards of both agencies recently commissioned a policy study by an independent analyst to determine how they might best cooperate in the future. The study, to be completed in 1985, will contain recommendations for general policy and specific action. In short, the two organizations are together refining a process that each has been pursuing separately for decades.

A commitment to join forces whenever possible should result in a strong and more effective response to the difficult issues they will confront in the coming months--the effect of the awareness campaign on volunteer literacy programs, quality control of projects in a time of tremendous growth, and new trends in volunteerism.

Numerous other instances of cooperation are currently taking place in the field. For example, in 1978, 12 CBOs serving adults and youth in New York City came together to discuss their experiences, share information and expertise, and provide mutual support. As they began to meet regularly, their informal network attracted other providers, including libraries, volunteer groups, and colleges. Calling themselves the Coalition of Adult Education Providers, they focused their cooperative efforts on public awareness and advocacy. By joining forces they were better able to promote literacy in general and a pluralistic delivery system in particular.

In 1984, now with 23 members serving approximately 13,000 students, the Coalition received a challenge grant from B. Dalton. It hired a part-time staff coordinator and is in the process of becoming a tax-exempt, nonprofit entity in order to further its aims more effectively.

In September 1983, the California State Library created the California Literacy Campaign and so far has allocated $5.1 million to fund local literacy programs. The purpose of the Campaign was to make the individual library a catalyst in the community for expansion of literacy services to the hard-to-reach adult. Twenty-seven libraries were initially selected to participate. The State Library hired a literacy specialist and a community organizer to facilitate the libraries' cooperation with community groups and other service providers.

Volunteers are the common denominator in almost all these programs, yet each program is quite distinct in terms of the different partnerships developed. In Pasadena, the library has created a community model and works with professional educators to address the needs of low-income undereducated adults. In San Francisco, volunteers are trained in cooperation with ABE: in Madoc and Siskyou Counties, they are trained through the reading departments of the community colleges. Churches, schools, and community centers also serve as learning sites.

The Jefferson County Adult Reading Project (JCARP) in Kentucky stands at the crossroads where ABE, the national voluntary groups, and the community are endeavoring to meet. The project was designed in 1978 by the Jefferson County public school district as a model program to reach adult beginning readers. JCARP was carefully monitored over a period of four years as staff members adjusted the program components to meet the needs of participants. The evaluation demonstrated dramatic success in student retention and academic gain. In 1982, JCARP became only the fourth adult education program to receive validation as an exemplary program by the Joint Dissemination and Review Panel of the U.S. Office of Education.

JCARP is funded by the state ABE, and affiliated with Laubach. It draws on both Laubach and LVA's instructional approaches and materials. Volunteers are an integral part of the program and work in teams with paid staff members. The learner-centered instruction takes place in small groups, with volunteers providing crucial individual attention to students' personal and academic needs in and out of the classroom.

JCARP has involved the Jefferson County community from the start. In addition to conducting a needs assessment, its staff thoroughly researched the target population during the demonstration period. At the same time, JCARP developed linkages with some 75 public and private agencies and organizations. These alliances have produced a broad community response to JCARP, from funding support to volunteer and student referrals.

JCARP has also received public funding for replication purposes. Programs modeled after the JCARP project now have been set up in nine other states and the Virgin Islands in addition to 50 sites in Kentucky.

Notes on Funding

There is a need to encourage cooperation among providers--in order to prevent duplication of services, stimulate new approaches to problems, and make full use of the strengths and resources of the cooperating agencies. But further collaboration will not only require a greater acknowledgement of interdependency on the part of the providers but also a willingness to cooperate. It will also require funding.

Unfortunately, despite the scope of the illiteracy problem, funding for adult basic education is not yet a priority in our society. With few exceptions, private funding has been token and federal and state support has been and remains inadequate. In fiscal year 1983, the federal ABE allocation to states was $86.4 million, down $13.6 million from the previous year. It has taken two years to regain that loss and there is no projection for an increase next year, despite the pressing need. (The fiscal year 1985 allocation of $100 million must be seen in the context of an overall education budget of $18.5 billion.) In 1983, 117,000 people were being served in ABE classes in Illinois, but there was no room for an additional 112,000 who sought to enroll. That same year in California, officials had to turn away at least 1,000 people a week. The majority of states have the same problem. Church-sponsored literacy programs depend on the largess of church members. CBOs are under-developed and under-funded, with operating budgets that range from $15,000 to $200,000 a year. They are especially vulnerable to political changes and are the first to be adversely affected when federal and state budgets are cut.

Voluntary LVA and Laubach programs fare no better. Too often staff or volunteer energy must be diverted from local program services to fund development. National and state offices are similarly understaffed; they and their local affiliates lack financial security and have to start from scratch each year to raise minimal budgets.

E: THE POTENTIAL OF VOLUNTEERS

Two Myths

To fairly assess the potential of volunteers in literacy requires dispelling two persistent myths which have gained credence in the 1980s. The first is that volunteerism is a panacea, that if we could just recruit and train enough volunteers, we could lick the problem of illiteracy.

Numbers alone refute this position. The two major voluntary organizations reach fewer than 100,000 adult learners a year; and the other providers, most of which use volunteers in adjunct roles, serve about 3 1/2 million persons (including 2.6 million for ABE). Yet even if the number of volunteers were tripled or quadrupled, this larger pool of tutors would not by itself be adequate to reach the millions of adult illiterates in need of help.

Adult illiteracy is a highly complex problem connected to poverty, race discrimination, and other equally complex social problems. The obstacles which prevent the disadvantaged from gaining access to the social benefits others take for granted--health care, employment, housing, and so forth--will not be eradicated simply by creating more volunteer literacy programs.(21)

The second myth is that volunteer programs are desirable in this decade of scant resources because donated time is cost-free or low-cost. Volunteer programs can be cost-effective, but to establish and maintain well-managed volunteer projects demands an investment of financial as well as human resources.

Professionals in the volunteer field generally agree on certain fundamentals. At the local level, volunteers must be properly recruited and trained and the trainers of volunteers must themselves be trained. Moreover, volunteers must be supervised and supported by reading experts and other professional personnel as needed. They also must be supplied with the instructional and other materials needed to function in their roles as tutors and staff. And their performances must be evaluated.

All of these "supports" require an organizational structure, which in turn takes money for office space, telephones, materials, and personnel. An average local program now requires a minimum of $10,000 a year for effective operation using part-time staff only. It would need a great deal more than that to expand its service.

The national volunteer organizations also need funding so that they can provide the necessary technical assistance to their state and local units as well as to other groups now requesting their help. And, while the average LVA state budget is $85,000 a year, state directors estimate that it would cost at least $150,000 annually for them to be properly staffed and able to meet the needs of their affiliates.

The Advantages of Volunteerism

Despite the constraints, volunteers are an increasingly important part of the answer for adults in need of instruction. Volunteer-managed programs are a valuable supplement and complement to existing ABE projects, among other providers, and they are needed to help expand literacy services in this country.

Because adult illiterates are often embarrassed by their lack of skills and are afraid of being "found out," they may shy away from the traditional classroom setting where they previously experienced failure. Volunteers and the voluntary programs provide incentive for students to enter and remain in a class or small group environment by working with them individually under the supervision of a teacher.

Volunteers can also offer one-to-one reading instruction outside the classroom, another motivational plus for students needing individual attention. Adult illiterates are often marginally employed and may work several jobs to make ends meet. They have family and other responsibilities. Volunteer tutors can provide flexible meeting times at convenient locations. They can reach the homebound and those who do not fit into an institutional program. They can offer personal involvement and support to the often ignored and intimidated

adult student. They demonstrate that the outside world does care. They extend the immediate environment of the student and can serve as role models or mentors. They change how students feel about themselves and, hence, what they can accomplish.

Volunteers are particularly appropriate for beginning students. Working with students at their own pace in a warm relationship, volunteers inspire trust and restore confidence.

In addition to bringing creativity and ingenuity to the teaching task, volunteers produce materials that are used by professionals. They publicize the problem of illiteracy in their role as community agents for change to a far greater extent than public institutions, and they have gained the support of other groups. Without "volunteer citizen efforts," many communities would lack literacy services altogether.

The Limitations of Volunteerism

While volunteer programs have their uniquely positive aspects, it is important to recognize that they also have areas of weakness. One limitation is that their instruction is rarely intensive. In most projects, volunteers and students commit themselves to meeting twice a week for a minimum of one hour, but with illness, holidays, vacations, and family and employment responsibilities on both sides, they fall far short of this ideal. An evaluation study of Project:LEARN in Cleveland documented that students remained in the program an average of nine months (267 days) but received only 51 hours of tutoring during that time.(22) When progress is slow, students are apt to become discouraged and drop out and the same is true of volunteers. The result is that usually only the most highly motivated and secure students in stable life situations are able to stay the course.

Volunteer programs serve two groups: students and volunteers. Although this helps the volunteer as a teacher, it sometimes takes the focus away from the student. The work of recruiting, training, and retaining volunteers can over-

shadow the work of providing for the recipients. Much of the staff's and/or volunteer coordinator's activities and efforts may be dominated by such tasks as publicity for recruiting volunteers and tracking and removing inactive tutors.

Another current weakness in volunteer programs has to do with their quality control and evaluation. Although in theory volunteer programs subscribe to the tenets of good program management, in practice many do not exercise it. Adequate program records are not always kept or reported. Instruction is not monitored as carefully as it should be. Tutor and student attendance is not tracked regularly. Groups of volunteers are sometimes given pre-service training in a local community by regional or national trainers without receiving the necessary follow-up support.

Ideally, an adult literacy program should regularly evaluate student learning to determine whether skills and goals are being achieved. However, volunteer programs are especially hard to evaluate. One reason is that well-controlled evaluations yielding hard data are expensive and the programs cannot afford this essential activity. Most lack adequate resources for their basic service activities. Another reason is that there are not enough tools available to evaluate the progress of low-level adult learners, the majority population in volunteer programs. Those tools that do exist are often not appropriate to assess one-to-one instruction, particularly when there is no set curriculum or uniformity of instruction.

Programs often do not specify in advance the intended outcome for their participants, that is, the specific changes that should occur in students as a result of participation. The primary intent of a program may be to improve reading skills or to improve a student's confidence and mastery of the environment. If a program focuses on affective change, obviously the method used to evaluate its effectiveness should be different from that used for a program focused primarily on improved reading skills. Yet sometimes the staff members of a program that tends to emphasize personal growth will assess program results on the basis of reading scores and discover no gain when in fact students have experienced increased independence and feelings of self-worth.

These difficulties in evaluation account for the lack of rigorous data about the actual effectiveness of tutoring today. An independent evaluation of the Lutheran Church Women's Volunteer Reading Aides Program revealed that "in most cases literacy organizations possess little or no evidence of program effectiveness, either as to the quality of tutors trained or the number of students who actually learn to read and become functionally literate."(23)

Unfortunately, the result of these problems is that most volunteer programs rely largely on anecdotal data from tutors and students to demonstrate success. Verbal and written testimonials from students who have learned to read are powerful and inspirational, but in a field that is increasingly professional and publicly scrutinized more objective analyses are needed.

There are no easy answers to these problems, most of which affect to some degree every provider discussed in this paper. But it is important to note that most of these weaknesses are the result of the programs having too few resources. They must have major new resources if they are to improve their management, planning, and accountability. At the same time, of course, volunteers themselves have to demonstrate a readiness to confront and tackle these hard issues.

Volunteers were pioneers in the field of adult literacy. They fought for public awareness and initiated tutorial programs. They persevered with few public or private resources, little recognition from society, and minimal support from the educational establishment and the political structure. At a time when training and instructional materials were child-oriented, they created alternatives specifically for adults. They took risks, experimented, and reached out to students who had fallen through the cracks of institutionalized programs.

But the pioneer days are over. There is a new frontier for volunteers now, one that has come with the maturation process. The challenge for volunteers at this juncture is to maintain the flexibility and vitality of their programs while at the same time ensuring greater professionalism and quality of service.

F: CONCLUSION

There are millions of educationally disadvantaged Americans, many of whom lack the basic skills necessary to participate fully in society. Only a small percentage are being served by the literacy providers examined in this paper.

Volunteers are a vital part of the present and future delivery system. They not only manage their own programs--LVA and Laubach--but also contribute their talents and skills to other providers, from the extensive network of ABE to the smallest CBO. A variety of program models with a volunteer component are demonstrating success and receiving recognition.

The creative use of volunteers is one of the most crucial challenges facing adult basic education today. In the future it appears that volunteers will perform a wider variety of tasks in the areas of advocacy, instruction, fund development, and community leadership, among others. Increasingly, some of these volunteers will be found among current or former students. The team approach--volunteers working together with paraprofessionals and professionals, paid staff working with unpaid staff--will be favored. Literacy specialists will be available to support volunteers. Students will receive a combination of group and individual instruction.

However, it must be emphasized again that volunteers alone cannot solve the problem of adult illiteracy. The current delivery system is stretched thin and can go no further without additional resources. Recruiting more volunteers will only add to the burden unless the system as a whole receives major new support. Funds for research and dissemination, program and materials development, staff and volunteer training, and management and evaluation are needed if the potential of adult basic education is to be realized.

The vast majority of educationally-disadvantaged adults in this country are not seeking further education. They are poor and suffer from multiple disadvantages which impede their full participation as citizens in a complex, modern society. Only a pluralistic delivery system can offer educational opportunities to these adults as well as the ones who have already come forward. Different types of

providers with different kinds of educational approaches should be available in every community and the field is trying to move in that direction.

There are signs that new partnerships among practitioners are creating the potential for such a system to emerge. Making headway, though, will require an enormous effort from the public and private sectors, a commitment of financial resources, and a social climate conducive to educational innovation and risk-taking.

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